

Roseola

(Roseola Infantum or Sixth Disease)

What is roseola?

Roseola is a common illness of childhood, characterized by a fever that lasts several days followed by a one-to two-day rash.

Who gets roseola?

Generally, children between the ages of 6 months and 24 months are more likely to get roseola. Infection is rare before age 3 months and after age four years.

How is roseola spread?

How it spreads is unknown, but it is known to be spread by a virus.

What are the symptoms of roseola?

- High fever, which starts suddenly and lasts about one to five days
- Occasional vomiting
- A rash that appears when the fever goes away. It begins with a faint rash on the trunk and neck that sometimes spreads to the face and extremities. The rash usually fades rapidly
- Runny nose, tiredness or irritability

How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

Symptoms appear in about 10 days.

How long is a person able to spread the virus that causes roseola?

Unknown, but most likely while the child has a fever and before the appearance of the rash.

Does past infection with roseola make a person immune?

Unknown. Since the symptoms are mild, they may not be reported to health-care professionals.

What complications can happen from roseola?

A child with a high fever may experience convulsions. Encephalitis is rare.

What is the treatment for roseola?

Rest, fluids and a non-aspirin medication to reduce fever are recommended.

What can be done to control the spread of roseola?

Exclude children with fever and rashes from childcare.

